

# 2022 ECONOMIC REPORT

## SOUTH CENTRAL REGION



DEPARTMENT OF  
HIGHER EDUCATION &  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The South Central Region is comprised of 12 counties in the center of the southern portion of Missouri. The region is home to several cities including West Plains and Poplar Bluff.

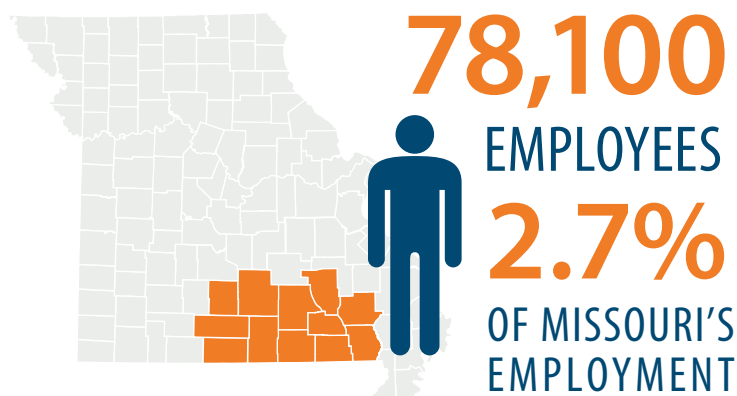
The South Central Region workforce has more than 78,100 employees, making up 2.7 percent of Missouri's employment. In 2021, 53 percent of the workforce was female and 47 percent was male, compared to Missouri's overall 49 percent female and 51 percent male. The regional average unemployment rate in 2021 was 4.8 percent.

The workforce is getting older in the South Central Region, a trend continuing throughout Missouri and the U.S. In 2021, 24 percent of the workforce was age 55 or older, up from 20 percent a decade earlier.

For the region, 6.4 percent of the workforce was non-white and 2.3 percent was Hispanic or Latino. This compares to the state averages of 17.6 percent non-white and 4.5 percent Hispanic or Latino.

In the South Central Region, 2.5 percent of the region's population (ages 18 to 64) speaks a language other than English at home. By comparison, Missouri was at 6.9 percent and the U.S. was at 23.1 percent.

The South Central Region has a higher percentage of the population with a disability compared to the state and the nation. For the South Central Region, 22.3 percent of the population has a disability compared to 12.2 percent in Missouri and 10.3 percent in the U.S.



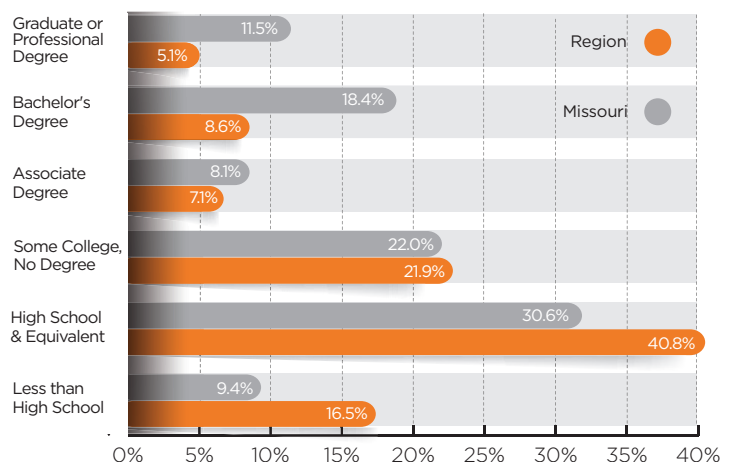
### Workforce Demographics

	SC Region	Missouri	Nationwide
Average Monthly Employment in 2021	78,103	2,928,368	152,580,667
Average Unemployment Rate in 2021	4.8%	4.4%	5.3%
Male	47.0%	51.0%	50.3%
Female	53.0%	49.0%	49.7%
Non-White	6.4%	17.6%	23.7%
Hispanic or Latino	2.3%	4.5%	16.7%
Ages 55 or Older	24.0%	23.0%	23.0%
With Disabilities (Ages 18-64)	22.3%	12.2%	10.3%
Below Poverty Level (Ages 18-64)	21.5%	12.6%	12.1%
Language other than English	2.5%	6.9%	23.1%
Education Associate Degree or Higher	20.9%	38.0%	41.6%

SOURCES: CENSUS ACS 2020-5YR EST.; LEHD 2ND QUARTER; BLS LAUS 2021

Educational attainment rates for the South Central Region are lower than those of the state for those with bachelor's or advanced degrees. Twenty-one percent of the region's population, age 25 and older, has an associate, bachelor's, or advanced degree compared to 38 percent for the state, and about 42 percent for the nation.

### Educational Attainment



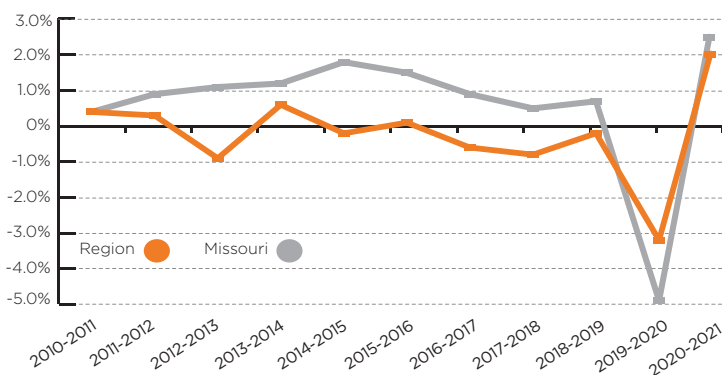
SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, ACS 2020 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

# SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

## INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

The South Central Region averaged over 58,300 jobs in 2021. The region gained 1,135 jobs, an increase of 2.0 percent from 2020 to 2021 whereas the region had lost almost 1,900 jobs from 2019 to 2020, resulting in a decrease of 3.2 percent employment growth due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, Missouri employment decreased by 4.9 percent, however Missouri employment increased by 2.5 percent in 2021, showing recovery from the pandemic impacts. From 2017 to 2021, the South Central Region averaged a -0.6 percent annual growth rate for an overall decrease of 2.3 percent; during that same period Missouri's employment declined by 1.4 percent.

South Central Employment Annual Growth Rate



SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, QCEW

*Health Care and Social Assistance* continues to be one of the largest employing industries in the region with over 11,300 jobs in 2021 and a -1.5 percent annual growth rate since 2017. *Manufacturing* is the second largest industry in the area with over 8,400 jobs. It gained 78 jobs since 2017.

The *Retail Trade* and *Accommodation and Food Services* industries also gained employment of 381 and 337 jobs, respectively, since 2017.

South Central Region Top Employing Industries

Industry	Employment		2017-2021		2020 Annual Wages
	2017	2021	Net Change	Empl. CAGR	
Health Care & Social Assistance	12,073	11,382	-691	-1.5%	\$35,832
Manufacturing	8,374	8,452	78	0.2%	\$41,172
Retail Trade	7,249	7,630	381	1.3%	\$28,356
Accommodation & Food Services	5,046	5,383	337	1.6%	\$17,208
Educational Services	5,440	5,328	-112	-0.5%	\$33,084
Public Administration	3,218	2,982	-236	-1.9%	\$35,532
Wholesale Trade	2,161	1,811	-350	-4.3%	\$55,404
Construction	1,912	1,787	-125	-1.7%	\$42,180
Finance & Insurance	1,871	1,775	-96	-1.3%	\$48,060
Professional, Science, & Tech. Servs.	1,392	1,536	144	2.5%	\$67,884
Administrative Support & Waste	1,696	1,515	-181	-2.8%	\$29,880
Transportation & Warehousing	1,424	1,437	13	0.2%	\$38,988

SOURCE: LEHD QWI, 2017-2021 ANNUAL AVERAGES

## LOCATION QUOTIENT

To understand the major industries within a region, an analysis of industry concentration or clustering can be useful. The Location Quotient (LQ) describes the concentration of an industry in a geographic region, in relation to the nation, with 1.0 being the national average. Industries with higher than 1.0 LQ indicate a concentration.

The South Central Region has higher concentrations in *Wood Product Manufacturing*, *Gas Stations*, *Forestry and Logging*, and *Machinery Manufacturing*.



2021 South Central Region Location Quotients

Industry	Employment	Location Quotient
Wood Product Manufacturing	1,542	9.9
Gasoline Stations	1,263	3.6
Forestry & Logging	64	3.3
Machinery Manufacturing	1,261	3.2
Social Assistance	2,839	1.9
General Merchandise Stores	2,156	1.9
Bldg. Material & Garden Equip. Dealers	968	1.8
Nursing & Residential Care Facilities	2,010	1.8
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	1,103	1.5
Truck Transportation	766	1.3
Animal Production & Aquaculture	125	1.3
Accommodation	676	1.2
Credit Intermediation & Related Activities	1,206	1.2
Repair & Maintenance	552	1.1
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	572	1.1

SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, QCEW

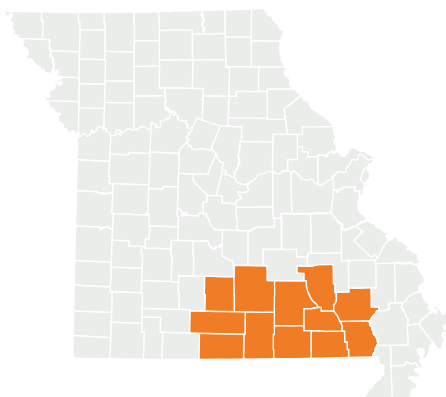
# SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Projected growth in industry helps to identify future employment needs for an area. Projections indicate that the largest industry growth in the South Central Region from 2020-2030 will be in the *Food Services and Drinking Places*; *Social Assistance*; *Machinery Manufacturing*; *Accommodation, including Hotels and Motels*; and *Hospitals* industries.

## South Central Region Largest Growth Industries 2020-2030

Industry	Employment		Change	
	2020 Estimated	2030 Projected	2020-2030 Numeric	Percent
Food Services & Drinking Places	4,166	4,888	722	17.3%
Social Assistance	3,906	4,438	532	13.6%
Machinery Manufacturing	1,537	1,880	343	22.3%
Accommodation, including Hotels & Motels	707	926	219	31.0%
Hospitals	2,155	2,346	191	8.9%
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	1,070	1,252	182	17.0%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	1,298	1,450	152	11.7%
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	865	960	95	11.0%
Repair & Maintenance	519	604	85	16.4%
Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	852	930	78	9.2%

SOURCES: MERIC INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS, 2020-2030



PROJECTED GROWTH BY INDUSTRY HELPS TO IDENTIFY FUTURE EMPLOYMENT NEEDS FOR AN AREA.

## OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS

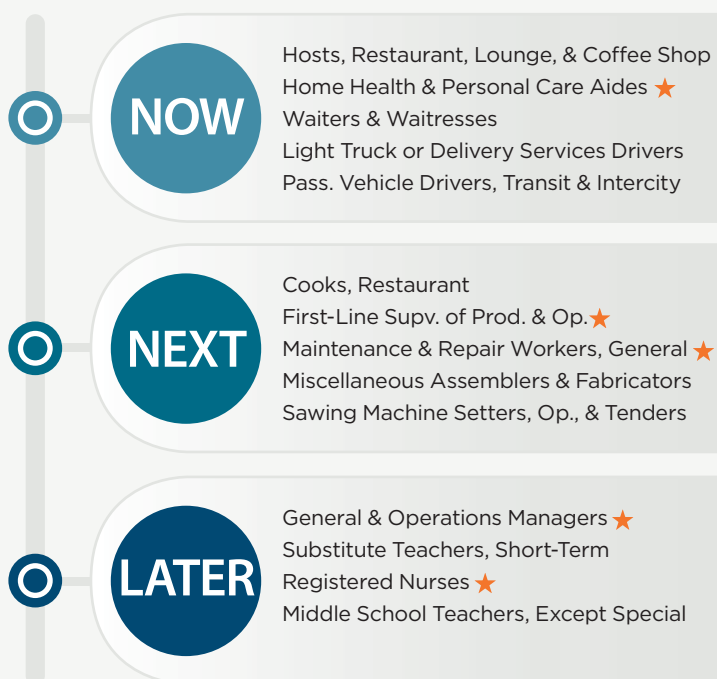
MERIC produces occupational projections that estimates labor demand over a 10-year period. MERIC categorizes these occupations using its Now-Next-Later method to help job seekers understand the training, education, and experience requirements for various occupations.

**Now** jobs typically require short-term, on-the-job training, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma. Now occupations with the most projected openings are *Home Health and Personal Care Aides*; *Cashiers*; and *Fast Food and Counter Workers*. *Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop*; *Home Health and Personal Care Aides*; and *Waiters and Waitresses* are projected to be the fastest growing Now occupations over the next decade.

**Next** jobs typically require a non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate to long-term training. *Assemblers and Fabricators*; *Cooks*; and *Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers* are projected to have the most openings for the Next category of occupations. *Cooks*; *First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers*; and *Maintenance and Repair Workers* are the fastest growing Next occupations.

**Later** jobs typically require a bachelor's degree or higher. For Later occupations, *General and Operations Managers*; *Registered Nurses*; and *Substitute Teachers* are projected to have the most openings. *General and Operations*; *Substitute Teachers*; and *Registered Nurses* are the fastest growing Later occupations.

## South Central Region Fastest Growing Occupations



NOTE: OCCUPATIONS WITH ANNUAL TOTAL OPENINGS OF LESS THAN 50 ARE OMITTED

SOURCE: MERIC OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS, 2020-2030

★ DENOTES OCCUPATIONS TOP TEN ONLINE JOB ADS FOR 2021-2022 IN THE REGION AND WITHIN THE NOW-NEXT-LATER CLASSIFICATIONS

# SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

## South Central Region Long-Term Occupational Projections by Top Openings

Occupation	2020 Estimated Employment	2030 Projected Employment	Growth Openings	Exits	Transfers	Total Openings	Median Wages
 NOW							
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	3,712	4,338	63	258	228	549	\$23,358 ★
Cashiers	3,114	2,988	-13	260	292	539	\$21,668 ★
Fast Food & Counter Workers	1,485	1,636	15	151	165	331	\$20,859 ★
Retail Salespersons	1,251	1,290	4	71	105	180	\$24,652
Office Clerks, General	1,637	1,566	-7	87	95	175	\$27,456 ★
 NEXT							
Miscellaneous Assemblers & Fabricators	1,884	2,012	13	74	139	226	\$30,717 ★
Cooks, Restaurant	495	707	21	35	51	107	\$20,792
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	813	797	-2	33	55	86	\$36,061 ★
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	660	645	-2	23	45	66	\$34,684 ★
Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	583	632	5	21	35	61	\$33,025 ★
 LATER							
General & Operations Managers	1,026	1,159	13	22	68	103	\$59,835 ★
Registered Nurses	1,675	1,715	4	45	43	92	\$59,639 ★
Substitute Teachers, Short-Term	735	756	2	44	40	86	\$26,032 ★
Middle School Teachers, Ex. Spec. & Career/Tech. Edu.	1,120	1,099	-2	34	44	76	\$46,010
Accountants & Auditors	444	483	4	13	28	45	\$52,621 ★




SOURCE: MERIC OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS 2020-2030

★ DENOTES OCCUPATIONS IN THE TOP TEN FOR 2021-2022 ON-LINE JOB ADS IN THE REGION & WITHIN THE NOW-NEXT-LATER CLASSIFICATION

## ONLINE JOB POSTINGS

Job postings are an indicator of demand and opportunities in an area and can assist individuals seeking job opportunities in current in-demand occupations. According to information based on online job posting data collected and aggregated by Lightcast™ for the Central Region, jobs like *Registered Nurses*; *Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers*; and *Home Health and Personal Care Aides* had a high number of job postings in the region during the last year.

### South Central Region Top Five Online Job Postings in Now-Next-Later Classification

Occupation Title	Online Job Postings
 NOW	
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	177
Retail Salespersons	175
Stockers & Order Fillers	113
Customer Service Representatives	110
Fast Food & Counter Workers	101
 NEXT	
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	183
Merchandise Displayers & Window Trimmers	157
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	152
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	131
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, & Health Technologists & Technicians, All Other	110
 LATER	
Registered Nurses	390
Medical & Health Services Managers	101
Physicians, All Other; & Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	85
Pharmacists	65
Clinical Laboratory Technologists & Technicians	55

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST™ (FORMERLY EMSI BURNING GLASS TECHNOLOGIES), ONLINE JOB ADS FROM JUNE 1, 2021 TO MAY 31, 2022

This report was prepared by the staff of the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) as part of the Missouri Workforce Report. All data in this report was current at the time of publication and is subject to revision. Additional details on data sources can be found in the full report. This workforce solution was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The solution was created by the grantee and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership.